

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

FUNDS: TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TEEN TOWN HALL MEETINGS, MENTOR TRAININGS, OUTREACH TO CHURCHES AND ADVOCACY EFFORTS; RESUME PARENT PEER EDUCATION; AND CONDUCT MEDIA CAMPAIGNS ON ISSUES RELATED TO TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION

TIME: VOLUNTEERS FOR THE “HAVE FAITH IN YOUTH” INITIATIVE AND TO SERVE AS HOSTS FOR TEEN TOWN HALL MEETINGS AND AS PARENT TRAINERS

GOODS: NONE NEEDED CURRENTLY

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ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET
\$507,600



Only when people are really engaged in their communities can they begin to make changes. The result of those changes—strong, supportive and nurturing communities—is what ultimately protects kids from teen pregnancy, as well as a host of other troubles.

BRENDA RHODES MILLER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
DC CAMPAIGN TO PREVENT TEEN PREGNANCY



DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Established in 1999, the DC Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy’s (DC Campaign) immediate goal is clearly an ambitious one: to cut the D.C. teen pregnancy rate in half by 2005. And they are well on their way to meeting this goal. Encouraging data from the D.C. Department of Health, State Center for Health Statistics, shows that the teen pregnancy rate dropped from a high of 238.7 in 1993 to 74.4 per 1,000 girls, ages 15 to 19, in 2001.

The organization’s approach is grounded in youth development as the most effective teen pregnancy prevention strategy. “Research shows that teen pregnancy is less likely when boys and girls, regardless of income or race, connect to their families, schools and neighborhoods in positive ways; when they get comprehensive teen-friendly health care; when they

experience success in school from an early age; and when they have safe places to spend time with adult supervision and interesting things to do,” said Brenda Rhodes Miller, DC Campaign’s executive director.

The organization’s “Have Faith in Youth” initiative invites area churches to open their doors to neighborhood teens one night a week for tutoring, mentoring and recreational activities. Church volunteers are among the 1,000 men and women who have been trained by the DC Campaign on “How to Talk to Teens about Love, Sex and Relationships.”

“Our volunteers come to realize you don’t need a degree in anatomy to talk to adolescents about sex,” said Miller. “You can always get a book to show them where the fallopian tubes are. Our training focuses instead on how to talk to teens

about their hopes and dreams, and how pregnancy will get in the way of that.”

Mary Freeney, a retired federal government employee who volunteers along with seven others at the “Have Faith in Youth” program at St. Mary’s Baptist Church on Eastern Avenue in D.C., said she gets as much out of the weekly program as the teens.

“If there’s one thing I’ve learned, it’s that teen pregnancy cannot be prevented without the full involvement of many segments of the community,” said Freeney. “People think today’s kids are different than we were. And in many ways they are. But they still need all the same things we did: close relationships with their parents or other adults, interesting things to do in their free time, a good school environment and a sense of belonging.”

